

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 17762 251716Z

40

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 L-02 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

SAJ-01 NIC-01 CU-02 /043 W

----- 104892

R 251431Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4876

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 17762

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CA, UR

SUBJ: THE OSCAR PETERSON APPEARANCE FIASCO

1. DETAILS OF CANCELATION OF TOUR BY CANADIAN POPULAR JAZZ
PIANIST OSCAR PETERSON WHO WAS HERE ON OFFICIAL USSR-CANADA
CULTURAL EXCHANGE, SUGGEST THAT SOVIETS OVERPLAYED THEIR HAND
AGAINST CANADIANS AND TURNED "EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE" INTO A
FIASCO. LAST MINUTE DESPERATE INTERVENTION BY APPARENT KGB
OFFICER INDICATES THAT PETERSON'S UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCES WERE
MORE THAN UNHAPPY COINCIDENCE. OUR IMMEDIATE IMPRESSION IS
THAT THE SOVIETS ATTEMPTED TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO PREVIOUS
THREATS TO EXERT PRESSURE AGAINST THE CANADIANS UNLESS THE
MOROZ AFFAIR COOLED DOWN, BUT THAT THEIR EFFORTS HAD EFFECTS
WHICH WERE TOTALLY UNANTICIPATED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 17762 251716Z

2. "UNORGANIZED" DIFFICULTIES BEGAN IN LENINGRAD WHERE ALL ROOMS OF PETERSON'S ENTOURAGE WERE BURGLARIZED. LENINGRAD AND TALLINN CONCERTS WERE SMASH SUCCESSES, BUT WHEN PETERSON AND GROUP ARRIVED AT MOSCOW AIRPORT AT 1130 ON NOVEMBER 21, THE TROUBLES BEGAN. NO GREETER FROM GOSKONTSERT WAS PRESENT. AFTER AN HOUR OF FRANTIC PHONE CALLS, CANADIAN EMBOFF WAS TOLD THEIR BILLET WAS THE HERETOFORE UNHEARD OF HOTEL URAL, NEWS WHICH HORRIFIED EVEN THEIR SOVIET DRIVER. GROUP GOT AS FAR AS URAL LOBBY, ON WHICH PETERSON'S COMMENT WAS "NO WAY." AFTER SIX HOURS OF ARGUMENTS, PETERSON WAS TOLD THAT HE COULD GO TO INTOURIST HOTEL BUT OTHERES WERE STUCK IN THE URAL. PETERSON REFUSED AND MADE FIRST THREAT TO CANCEL OUT. THIS EVENTUATED IN OFFER OF ROOMS AT ROSSIYA FOR GROUP, BUT IN EVENING PETERSON AND MANAGER AND WIVES WERE PREVENTED FROM ENTERING THE RESTAURANT ON TOP OF ROSSIYA, ALTHOUGH CANADIAN EMBASSY HAD CALLED FOR RESERVATIONS. MORE TROUBLES FOLLOWED AND IT WAS 2330 BEFORE THE GROUP ATE AND 0230 BEFORE THEY SLEPT.

3. PETERSON WAS SO UPSET THAT HE SAID HE WOULD CANCEL HIS FOUR-DAY SOLD-OUT APPEARANCES IN MOSCOW. WHEN SOVIETS REALIZED HE WAS SERIOUS, COMPLETE CHANGE OF FACE OCCURRED. A YOUNG, BUT AUTHORITATIVE PERSON NAMED PLESHKOV TOOK OVER THE OPERATION, PUSHING THE GOSKONTSERT PEOPLE ASIDE, AND VOWED THAT PETERSON COULD HAVE "ANYTHING" AS LONG AS HE MADE HIS APPEARANCES. PLESHKOV EVEN PROMISED TO HAVE MINISTER OF CULTURE APPEAR IN PERSON TO MAKE APOLOGIES (THE THOUGHT OF A KGB OFFICER ORDERING THE NEW MINISTER, A CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO, TO APOLOGIZE TO A VISITING PIANO PLAYER IS A BIT MUCH). BUT PLESHKOV'S EFFORTS WERE USELESS AND HIS TACTLESSNESS ACTUALLY PROVED COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. PETERSON DEPARTED IN DUDGEON, AND RUMORS ARE FLYING ALL OVER MOSCOW ABOUT THE FIASCO. TO ADD TO THE SOVIETS' DIFFICULTIES, THEY ARE NOW OPEN TO CHARGES OF MISTREATING A BLACK PERFORMER. TO ADD INJURY TO INSULT, THE BOX-OFFICE RECEIPTS FOR ENTIRE SERIES OF SOLD-OUT CONCERTS MUST NOW BE REFUNDED.

STOESSEL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL EXCHANGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW17762
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740341-1015
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741115/aaaaamfg.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <09 JUL 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE OSCAR PETERSON APPEARANCE FIASCO
TAGS: PFOR, CA, UR, (PETERSON, OSCAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005